



## **THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS/OFFICE OF ADMISSIONS**

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### **TO: APPLICANTS TAKING THE FEBRUARY 2017 CALIFORNIA BAR EXAMINATION**

**Please carefully read this bulletin prior to the first day of the examination as it contains important information that you will need to know.**

### **SCHEDULE OF THE EXAMINATION**

**The General Bar Examination will be administered on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, February 21, 22 and 23, 2017. The Attorneys' Examination will be administered on Tuesday and Thursday, February 21 and 23, 2017.** Each day, there will be a morning and an afternoon session; each session is three hours. Applicants using laptop computers must be seated no later than 8:20 a.m. All applicants must be seated no later than 8:30 a.m. The examination will begin immediately following the instructions. You should plan to arrive at least twenty minutes early to locate your assigned section or room. You must be seated no later than 1:30 p.m. for the afternoon sessions; instructions will begin promptly at 1:45 p.m. The examination will begin immediately following the instructions. The examination is scheduled to conclude each day at approximately 5:00 p.m.; it may be earlier or later depending on when the examination started. Applicants granted extended time may have different schedules, which are communicated to them individually in advance of the examination.

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE EXAMINATION**

The General Bar Examination consists of two sections: the written section, consisting of six essays and two Performance Tests (PT), and the 200-item Multistate Bar Examination (MBE). An applicant can earn up to 100 raw points on each of the six essays and up to 200 raw points on each PT. Scaled MBE scores are reported on a 2000-point scale, and scores on the written portion of the examination are scaled to the MBE and reported on a 2000-point scale. The written section is weighted 65% of the total, the MBE is weighted 35% of the total, and the passing score on the examination is 1440.

The Attorneys' Examination consists of the six essays and two PTs from the General Bar Examination. An applicant can earn up to 100 raw points on each essay and up to 200 raw points on each PT. Written scores are scaled to the MBE and reported on a 2000-point scale. The written section is 100% of the total, and the passing score is 1440.

All examination answers will be graded, including those from applicants who, for whatever reason, do not complete the examination in its entirety.

The Committee of Bar Examiners (Committee) is the sole judge of the validity of the examination and, at its discretion, may determine that the result of any test or any part of any test or any individual's score is not valid. Should the Committee invalidate any part of the test, or if any individual's test is declared invalid or for any reason any part of the test cannot be graded, the Committee may, at its discretion, decide to make a pass/fail decision on the basis of the valid portion of the applicant's test product available to the Committee.

If you are an attorney who has been approved to take the Attorneys' Examination (2-day examination), the words "2-Day Exam" should be printed on your admittance ticket. If those words are not printed on your admittance ticket, you are scheduled to take the 3-day General Bar Examination. Requests to change from the 2-day examination to the 3-day examination, or vice versa, cannot be honored after the final filing deadline for applications.

## EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION RULES AND POLICIES

Applicants failing to follow oral and written instructions or examination rules and policies while or after the examination is in session will be issued a Chapter 6 Notice in accordance with the provisions of Title 4, Division 1, Chapter 6 of the Rules of the State Bar of California (*Admissions Rules*). Specific conduct warranting a Chapter 6 Notice includes that which results in a violation of security or disrupts the administration of the examination, such as bringing unauthorized items into the examination room (e.g., cell phones, notes, etc.), writing or typing after time has been called, looking at another applicant's papers, talking while the examination is in session, or being abusive to other applicants, staff, proctors and/or other examination personnel. The Committee will be advised of all Chapter 6 Notices that have been issued. In some cases, applicants may be subject to dismissal from an examination test center. Applicants are expected at all times to maintain a professional attitude toward other applicants, staff, proctors and other examination personnel.

Applicants cannot wear hats, caps, hoods or any other type of headwear during the examination. The Committee, however, will consider petitions filed by applicants seeking exemptions from the policy that would permit them to wear headwear due to their religious beliefs while in a secure examination test center. Such requests must be submitted on the Committee's form, which is available online under "Forms" on the Admissions' portion of the State Bar's website ("Future Lawyers"), and filed no later than the final deadline for filing testing accommodations petitions. Upon arrival at the test center, applicants must be prepared to show a letter from the Committee that permits them to bring the headwear into the examination room and the headwear may be subject to inspection. Applicants attempting to enter the test center wearing headwear who do not have a letter from the Committee authorizing them to do so will be issued a Chapter 6 Notice and will be asked to remove the headwear.

**During the essay and Performance Test sessions, only the following items are allowed in the examination room without prior approval (all items are subject to inspection):** the admittance ticket with no writing on it; non-digital pens (if you are handwriting the examination, you must bring your own pens); silent analog watches, non-digital timers and clocks measuring 4" x 4" or smaller; rulers; paper clips; pen-style highlighters (must not be used on answers); inhalers; eyeglasses (no cases or sunglasses); foam ear plugs (must not be connected); feminine hygiene items; prescription medication; diabetes-related equipment (does not include food or drinks); eye drops in single-use vials, government-issued ID; cash (must not have writing on it), credit/debit cards that might be needed for the lunch break (you are not allowed to bring a wallet into the test center); and keys. You may also bring: a back support; an orthopedic cushion; a standard-size pillow without a case; one bookstand; one foot rest; splints and braces; crutches; wheelchairs; casts; hearing aids; TENS units; and, the following laptop accessories: separate keyboard, mouse (wired or wireless), laptop riser/stand no higher than 4" and a solid color mouse pad with no writing on it.

**During the MBE sessions, the items listed above are allowed in the examination room, except for pens, rulers, paper clips, highlighters, back supports, orthopedic cushions, pillows, bookstands or foot rests.** In addition, you must bring your own pencils (several sharpened pencils are recommended; mechanical pencils are not permitted). Pencil sharpeners and separate erasers will not be allowed into the examination room.

**If items not listed above are brought into the examination room either intentionally or inadvertently, they will be confiscated, you will receive a Chapter 6 Notice and, possibly, additional sanctions imposed by the Committee. In accordance with the Committee's policies, you will receive a score of zero for any session during which you are found to have brought an unauthorized electronic device, such as a cell phone or activity tracker devices (like a Fitbit), into the examination room, as well as any additional sanctions the Committee may impose.**

If you wish to bring items into an examination test center that are not listed above for either the essay and Performance Test or MBE sessions, you must file a petition for testing accommodations using the Committee's forms in conformance with the Committee's policies and deadlines. (This includes pens, back support,

orthopedic cushions, pillows and foot rests during the MBE sessions.) Permission to use specific items will not be granted as a matter of convenience or preference.

In addition to other items you must not bring into the examination room, please note that unless otherwise specifically granted as an accommodation, **applicants cannot bring wallets, tissues, cough drops/throat lozenges, gum, candy, or other food or drinks into the examination room.** Water and tissues will be available nearby.

### TEST CENTER ENVIRONMENT

While every effort will be made to keep the environment of the test center comfortable and quiet, there are times when events or conditions occur beyond the control of the Committee. For instance, the temperature of the test center may fluctuate due to the weather or the test center's cooling/heating equipment; applicants should be prepared for either warm or cold temperatures. Efforts will be made to keep the test center quiet, but there may be forces outside the control of the Committee so that such an environment cannot be guaranteed. You should come prepared to accommodate noises, such as those made by other applicants taking the examination, proctors carrying out their duties, people entering/exiting the examination room, equipment inside or outside the test center that may make sounds while operating, other meetings or conventions in the same facility, etc. Ear plugs, in the form specified earlier, are strongly recommended.

### LAPTOP COMPUTER USERS

After you have been notified your admittance ticket is available for printing, you are eligible to have your laptop computer certified for use during the examination. The required security software (SofTest) must be downloaded onto your computer and the certification process must be completed by Friday, February 17, 2017. The Laptop Computer Program Bulletin for each examination, which is found on the State Bar's website, contains the details and requirements for participation in the program. Technical assistance will not be available at the test center. You must be prepared to handwrite your examination answers if the software or your computer is not working properly, or if electricity is not available.

If you are using a laptop computer to take the examination, it is your responsibility to timely upload your exam files containing your answers to the six (6) essay questions and two (2) Performance Tests (1 exam file for each written session for a total of 4 exam files). If you fail to do so by the published deadline, a deduction of ten scaled points will be taken from your total written scaled score. If you fail to upload your answer files within two (2) weeks of the published deadline, you will be given a grade of zero (0) for each answer that is not received by the State Bar's Office of Admissions by the published deadline. Applicants are expected to comply with the published deadlines; there are no waivers of the deadlines or the sanctions that will be imposed as a result of applicants' failure to upload their exam files.

### GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Your admittance ticket contains your applicant number, your file number, and your NCBE number. **Do not write anything on the ticket.** You will be required to show your ticket to the proctor when you enter the test center. You must keep it in your possession throughout the examination.
2. If items other than those allowed are brought to the test center, you will be required to leave them at your own risk outside of the examination area. The Committee assumes no responsibility for the safekeeping of items that you bring to the test center. You are not permitted access to those items while the examination is in session.
3. You should bring any small permitted personal items, e.g., prescription medication, foam ear plugs, pens, etc., into the examination area in a small, clear plastic bag. Larger items, such as pillows, do not need to fit into the clear plastic bag that holds your smaller items.

4. Signs will be posted showing seating assignment by the applicant number on your admittance ticket. You must occupy the same seating space throughout the examination.
5. Upon arrival at your seat, you will find an identification badge that will be your identification credential during administration of the examination and which you may be required to show at any time. The badge must be fastened so it can be easily seen by the proctors. You will be told to relocate the badge if it is not placed appropriately. The badge must be left at your seat during the lunch break.
6. At some time during administration of the examination, you will be required to provide your fingerprints. If you refuse to provide the required fingerprints, a Chapter 6 Notice will be issued to you.
7. During the examination, you will be required to show a government-issued ID card that has your photograph, such as Driver's License, California Identification Card or Passport, for the purpose of verification of identity. You must carry this photograph ID card at all times during the examination.
8. At the beginning of each Essay and PT session of the examination, you will be instructed to write your applicant number, name, and signature in the upper right hand tab of each of your answer book covers. Do not write notes, answers, time schedules or make any marks on the inside or outside of your answer book covers. Prior to grading, the tab containing your personal information will be removed after a code number has been assigned and labeled on each answer cover and tab. Thereafter, answers are identified by code number only; nothing about an individual applicant is known to the Graders.
9. You are not allowed to make notes from memory prior to the start of the examination session. If you are using your laptop computer, you may not access any notes or other documents on your computer after you have entered the secure examining area. Scratch paper will be distributed for the Essay and PT sessions of the examination. Scratch paper is not permitted during the MBE portion of the examination. **You must not make notes or write anything on your admittance ticket.**
10. There is a separate answer book for each written question of the examination, which is numbered to correspond to the number of the question. If you are handwriting your answers, you must be certain that the answer to Question No. 1 is written in the book for Question No. 1, etc. Answers written in a wrong answer book or typed in the wrong answer window while using SofTest, or more than one answer is typed in a text box screen while using SofTest require special handling and the grading of an applicant's answer could be delayed as a result.
11. If you need additional scratch paper or lined paper to write your answers during the examination, raise your hand and a proctor will provide you with what you need. Nothing written on scratch paper will be graded.
12. If you are handwriting, you should do so as legibly as possible. A ballpoint pen, with blue or black ink, must be used to write your answers. Answers to the Essay and PT questions written in pencil are not acceptable. Only non-mechanical pencils may be used for the MBE portion of the examination. Neither highlighters nor white-out may be used on your answers to the written portions of the examination.
13. All answers to the MBE portion of the examination must be marked on the answer sheets provided. If you have circled your answers in the question booklet, extra time to transfer answers to the answer sheet will not be granted. Only answers marked on the answer sheets will be scored.
14. Examination questions and used scratch paper may not be taken out of the examination room. After completing each session of the examination, all examination questions and used scratch paper must be placed in the envelope designated for that purpose.
15. If you handwrite your examination answers, it is your responsibility to turn in your written examination answers to the proctors. If you leave the test center with your answers, the answers will not be graded.

16. The examination is electronically timed and the official time is kept by the announcer. You are encouraged to keep track of your own time, however, as wall clocks are not provided. During the instructions at the beginning of each session, you will be advised of the courtesy time warnings that will be given. Any failure on the part of the announcer to give the planned warnings will not affect the outcome of the examination or the grading process.
17. Timing devices, i.e., watches and clocks, brought into the examination test centers are to be used solely for the determination of the passage of time. They cannot have a digital display, must be absolutely silent and cannot be larger than 4" x 4". Timing devices that are programmable and/or that make noise are not permitted. If found, they will be confiscated, and the applicant will receive a Chapter 6 Notice.
18. Writing and typing of answers must be completed when time is called. Please note that extra time is not granted to any individual applicant for any reason. If you attempt to write anything after time has been called, you will receive a Chapter 6 Notice.
19. Restrooms and water will be available at each test center. You should use the facilities before taking your seat so that you do not miss the instructions prior to the start of each session. Extra time to use the restroom will not be granted. You will not be permitted to use the restroom or leave your seat during the last several minutes of the examination session (5 to 15 minutes depending on the session). After time is called, you will **not** be permitted to use the restroom or leave your seat until all materials are collected and inventoried. If you fail to remain seated after being advised to do so or while the examination materials are collected and inventoried, you will receive a Chapter 6 Notice.
20. If you are leaving your seat for any reason, you should be considerate of others who are taking the examination. The scraping of chairs, heavy footsteps, or conversation just outside the examination area disturbs others.
21. If you leave the secured examination area during the examination session, you will not be permitted to return for the purpose of completing your examination answers.
22. At laptop computer test centers, laptop computers may not be disconnected from electrical outlets or removed from the examination room while the examination is in session, even if you have completed the examination for that session. You must wait until the examination session has concluded and applicants are dismissed before retrieving your computer.
23. The proctors' chief function is to proctor the examination; however, if asked, the proctors will attempt to assist with any problems that may arise.
24. If there is an emergency of any kind, you should remain seated and wait for instructions on how to proceed.

### **NO SMOKING**

Smoking is prohibited at the test centers that do not allow smoking in accordance with city ordinance.

### **EXAMINATION ATTENDANCE POLICY**

If you do not attend a required, scheduled examination session, you will not be permitted to attend the remaining examination session(s). For instance, if you are absent for the Tuesday morning session, you will not be allowed to take any remaining sessions of the examination. Applicants must make a good faith attempt to complete each session of the examination for which they are present. Failure to do so may lead to receipt of a Chapter 6 Notice and being prohibited from attending any remaining examination session(s).

Applicants taking the Attorneys' Examination will be allowed back into the examination test center on Thursday morning if they were present for both morning and afternoon sessions on Tuesday.

## **LATE ARRIVAL TO TEST CENTER**

If you arrive at the test center after one (1) hour of testing time has elapsed, you will not be permitted to enter the test center.

## **MORAL CHARACTER**

The *Admissions Rules* require a positive moral character determination before the Committee may recommend that an applicant be admitted to practice law. The process is initiated by the filing of the Application for Determination of Moral Character. The processing of these applications generally takes a minimum of 180 days and sometimes longer to complete. If you have not already filed a moral character application, you should do so now to avoid delays in your admission to practice law if you are successful on the California Bar Examination. The application must be filed online through the State Bar's website at <http://admissions.calbar.ca.gov>.

## **ADMISSION STATUS SCREEN**

Admission Status Screens (Status Screen) provide applicants with information regarding the admission requirements that have been met and those that are pending or not yet satisfied. You may access your Status Screen through the online application system, which most applicants use to apply for the examination. Applicants are able to log into the system by providing their SSN/Registration Number, Birth Date, and File Number.

If your address changes, you must go online to <http://admissions.calbar.ca.gov> and log into your Admission Status Screen and select "Change My Profile." Your contact information will be updated within 3 to 5 business days.

## **DUPLICATE ADMITTANCE TICKET/CHANGING TEST CENTERS**

You may print a duplicate admittance ticket from your Status Screen. You also may change your assigned test center, although space may not be available at your preferred test center, from your Status Screen. The last day to change your test center is January 17, 2017.

## **FURTHER COMMUNICATION**

For particular questions regarding your status or the other requirements for admission, you should contact the State Bar's Office of Admissions in writing. Email communications with applicants are not permitted and a response will not be forthcoming if you send an email to the Office of Admissions concerning your file. If you need to contact the office by telephone, however, the following numbers are provided:

|                    |                    |                      |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
|                    | <u>Los Angeles</u> | <u>San Francisco</u> |
| Applicant Services | (213) 765-1500     | (415) 538-2300       |

## **CALIFORNIA BAR EXAMINATION RESULTS**

Results from the February 2017 administration of the California Bar Examination are scheduled to be mailed to applicants on Friday, May 12, 2017 and will be sent to the address on file as of April 28, 2017.

You will be able to determine whether your name appears on the pass list beginning Friday, May 12, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. (Pacific Time), through the State Bar's website at <http://admissions.calbar.ca.gov>. You will need your File Number and Applicant Number, which are listed on the admittance tickets and ID badges, to access the pass list.